

# WORKERS WORLD

Workers and oppressed peoples of the world unite!

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50¢

## 'BAIL OUT THE UNEMPLOYED'

# Angry protests target Wall St.

By Brenda Sandburg  
New York

Their chants echoing off the tall buildings of New York's financial district, a thousand people marched and rallied at Wall Street April 3 to demand a bailout of the people, not the banks. Protesters called for a real jobs program and a moratorium on foreclosures and evictions.

The diverse crowd of unionists, community activists, youth and students from the New York area, the Midwest and other parts of the country was living proof of a growing and militant mass movement in response to the devastating loss of jobs and homes sweeping the country.

The demonstration, organized by the Bail Out the People Movement, began with a rally at the corner of Wall and Broadway at 1 p.m. on a busy workday. The speakers, representing a broad range of organizations, told of struggles they are waging in their communities against foreclosures, cutbacks in health care and education, and attacks on union jobs and benefits.

"This is the opening of a serious nationwide struggle for a jobs program," said Larry Holmes, a leader of the Bail Out the People Movement and a co-chair of the rally. Noting that many laid-off people are feeling shame, he declared April 3 unemployed people's liberation day.

"We've got to stop turning our backs on each other, tuning out with our iPods and all those things we stick in our ears to listen to music," Holmes declared. "Instead of tuning out we've got to tune in and demand jobs, demand our right to a home. Every time that we've done this we've made history. That's our biggest message: Organize, organize, organize."

Midway through the two-and-a-half-hour rally, what had been a light rain turned into a downpour as thunder rumbled overhead. People did not leave but braved it out under umbrellas.

The police had put up barricades to keep every-

*Continued on page 6*

Protesters focus on AIG's headquarters to demand bailout funds be used to create jobs.

WW PHOTOS: G. DUNKEL; LEILANI DOWELL



## BOSSES TALK RECOVERY

# Workers lose jobs

By Fred Goldstein

While talk about signs of a possible economic recovery drove the stock market up for four weeks in a row, beginning March 10, it is clear that the recovery being talked about was a recovery of the bosses and bankers, not the workers.

Three quarters of a million workers lost their jobs during those four weeks, but the financiers and speculators were driving up the markets based upon reports of increased profitability among the banks and a rise in activity in the bond market.

On April 3, the day the Labor Department announced that 663,000 workers had lost their jobs in the month of March, the Dow Jones Industrial Average of stocks went up 49 points, capping a four-week rise. Then the market started going down again, based on reports of a decline in corporate profitability.

This clearly shows differences in what a recovery means to Wall Street and what it

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# Bringing ‘struggle into the struggle’

## Cleveland workers discuss ‘Low-Wage Capitalism’

By Martha Grevatt  
Cleveland

From March 25 to 27, community, labor and student activists in Cleveland joined Fred Goldstein, author of “Low-Wage Capitalism: Colossus with Feet of Clay,” in discussions on the current economic crisis and prospects for working-class resistance.

At a public forum, Prisscilla Cooper, president and CEO of Family Connection Center, an advocacy group for women trying to access public benefits, outlined the dire situation for mothers and children trapped in the welfare system. When President Clinton instituted “welfare reform,” the federal government set a lifetime limit of five years for families to collect public assistance, but in Ohio the limit was reduced to three years.

During those three years a recipient must work 30 hours a week for less than minimum wage. “There are no jobs for them to access” after the three years, Cooper explained. With no income at all families are squatting in abandoned, unheated buildings. Child support payments go directly to the state to reduce the cost to the government of providing benefits. Penniless, mothers are placing their children in foster care. “There is a war on mothers and children,” Cooper charged.

Goldstein put the crisis of the working class, from the attack on the autoworkers’ union to the superexploitation of low-wage workers around the world, in the context of capitalist overproduction. The author offered an answer to the question, what do we do?

“We are at the end of a long period in which there have been no big struggles against the bosses. It’s been 70 years. There have been many valiant struggles, from

the Phelps Dodge to the Caterpillar workers and the transit workers to the janitors and the hotel workers, but they have been isolated struggles, guerrilla wars.

“What’s needed to answer a crisis of this magnitude is a huge, class-wide, mass struggle characterized by what I would call the three S’s: It has to be a social struggle, there has to be solidarity in the struggle, and there has to be struggle in the struggle. And it has to be directed against capitalism,” said Goldstein.

### What unions could do

“The capitalist class is very glad to point out, over and over, the decline of the trade unions, how they only have 13 per cent of the workforce. It went up a little bit, up to 15 or 16 million recently. But these are working-class organizations, and they have tens of thousands of locals around the country, and they have hundreds of central labor councils, and they have billions of dollars in resources.”

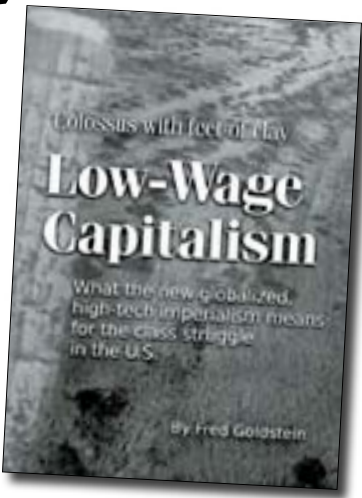
“The problem,” continued Goldstein, “is that the leadership is asleep at the wheel, or aiding and abetting those who want to keep the workers from fighting. There was one little flash that electrified everybody, the Republic Doors and Windows workers, who took over the plant. They scared the hell out of the bourgeoisie.

“Just down the road is Michigan, and the UAW and the autoworkers who are being hammered, they’re the ones who sat down in the thousands to create the modern industrial unions in 1936 and 1937, when they took over the Flint Fisher Body plants. That’s the kind of struggle that we’re going to have to forge, only this time it can’t just be the unions unto themselves.”

Goldstein talked about what is necessary in this struggle: “The [unions] have to think about the communities, about racism, about the undocumented workers who are being persecuted by Homeland Security. They have to think about women, about the lesbian and gay community. These are the allies of any progressive force who will take the initiative against capitalism.

“They can draw huge reservoirs of support if they take up the demands of the community, if they demand food, if they demand an end to this horrible welfare system—it’s an atrocity. They have to care about two and a quarter million prisoners who are behind bars, the majority of whom are Black and Latina/o. They have to know that these prisons are sweatshops, slave shops, that 40 states have industrial departments where they hire out prisoner workers to corporations for pennies a day.

“In 1866 Marx told the union movement that it had to be for the emancipation of the entire working class, organized and unorganized, and it’s as true today as it was then,” said Goldstein. “We have to look for ways of multiplying the struggles, of bringing everyone together, the workers and the communities, to form an ironclad alliance to fight for food, housing, jobs, health care and everything that the masses of people need.” □



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## Marxist author on California tour

Fred Goldstein, author of the recently published book, “Low-Wage Capitalism,” is on tour in California.

He will be introduced at the Modern Times Bookstore in San Francisco on Tuesday, April 14 by well-known author and activist Michael Parenti. The event will be at 7:30 p.m., 888 Valencia Street. For more information contact 415-738-4739.

Goldstein will be speaking and signing books at the Malcolm X Library in San Diego on Saturday, April 18, 3 p.m., 5148 Market Street. Contact 619-527-3405, the library for details.

Among other events in Los Angeles, the Workers World LA chapter will host a forum for Goldstein on Friday, April 24, 7 p.m. at 5274 W. Pico Blvd. (between Fairfax and LaBrea), 2nd Floor. He will give a Marxist analysis of the current economic crisis, the fight back and the need for a socialist perspective. For details contact 310-677-8647. □

### Colossus with Feet of Clay:

## Low-Wage Capitalism

What the new globalized, high-tech imperialism means for the class struggle in the U.S.

By Fred Goldstein

Available at *Leftbooks.com*

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# Philly cops target immigrant shop owners

By **Betsey Piette**  
**Philadelphia**

Immigrant small shop owners are coming forward with disturbingly similar accounts of police drug raids that began with the destruction of private surveillance cameras and ended with the looting of cash and merchandise from their shops by members of the department's undercover Narcotics Field Unit.

These police smash-and-grab operations, which often resulted in shop owners and their family members being hauled off to jail on trumped-up charges, reportedly began as early as March 2007. Korean, Jordanian, Dominican and Latina/o bodega and "mom-and-pop" store owners were all subject to these attacks. A video of one raid obtained by the Philadelphia Daily News can be seen on philly.com.

At least 14 victims of this crime spree came forward after news surfaced about an investigation of Jeffrey Cujdik, one of the officers involved. Cujdik had also used a paid informant to lie about drug buys in order to obtain search warrants that led to hundreds of criminal cases targeting Philadelphia's Black community. Philadelphia's public defender has moved to throw out criminal charges against over two dozen people falsely accused in those raids.

One of the first to report this abuse of storeowners was a Korean couple, David and Eunice Nam. In July 2007, Cujdik and his narcotics squad members raided their Olney tobacco shop. The five plainclothes officers, with guns drawn, smashed two surveillance cameras and yanked wires from the ceiling.

The Nams say they were handcuffed and forced to the floor as the officers rifled through drawers, dumped cigarette cartons on the floor, and took cash from the registers. The Nams were jailed and

arrested for selling tiny zip-lock bags that police consider drug paraphernalia, but which the couple described as tobacco pouches. Police seized over \$2,500 in the raid.

An association of Dominican shop owners told similar stories involving the same officers. Cops would take food and drinks from stores. Merchandise was destroyed or vandalized. Cash was confiscated from registers and personal items were also taken, the owners say.

Cujdik applied for search warrants and played a key role in the raids. Cops charged shop owners with possessing and delivering drug paraphernalia. Storeowners have been sentenced to probation or less in cases that have been settled.

## Complaints against cops surface daily

Jordanian shop owner Moe Maghtha, who now runs his father's South Philly tobacco shop, which was raided in December 2007, told the cops: "You're not allowed to sell those bags, OK. Just take them out. You don't have to rob my store and steal cigarettes." (Philadelphia Daily News, March 20) Maghtha witnessed a raid on his father's store. He said over \$14,000 in cash was taken by Cujdik and six other officers.

After his store was raided and he was arrested and sentenced to nine months probation for possessing and selling drug paraphernalia, Maghtha's father appealed the case. In November 2008, 11 months after the first raid, the narcotics officers returned, claiming they had seen three people buying drugs from the shop.

Maghtha had saved images on a shop computer that showed a police officer clipping the surveillance wires during the 2007 raid. He believed the officers had returned for that video evidence. He said that during their return visit, police put a gun to his father's head and demanded the video.

"They took everything from the computer—the hard drive, the DVR card, the DVD and CD-ROM player," Maghtha said.

New allegations are surfacing by the day. Juan M. Collado-Gómez, owner of López Grocery in the Tioga section of Philadelphia, came forward to complain that Richard Cujdik, Jeffrey Cujdik's brother, targeted his store in September 2007. After police raided his store and cut surveillance wires, Collado-Gómez and a cousin were arrested. When he was released he found that his store and two apartments above had been ransacked and that \$8,560 was missing.

Another Dominican, Luciano Estévez, co-owner of a West Philadelphia shop, reported a similar raid in August 2008, where \$9,000 was missing. The police property receipt documented about \$800. Storeowners typically have thousands of dollars in cash on hand from lottery, cigarette and phone-card sales, as well as cash to pay wholesale grocery vendors.

The immigrants targeted by the police narcotics unit came to the U.S. with documents and have no prior arrest records. Many believed that coming to the U.S. would fulfill a dream of "getting ahead." Emilio Vargas, who came from the Dominican Republic in 1996 and whose building in the Kensington area was raided in 2007, said, "I used to believe in justice in America. I don't know now. It makes me question the justice system."

## 'Police get away with everything'

Witold "Vic" Walczak, legal director of the Pennsylvania American Civil Liberties Union, described the shop owners as an "easy target" of police abuse because they struggle with English and are less likely to report police abuse. Danilo Burgos, president of Philadelphia's 300-member Dominican Grocery Store Association, concurred. "Back home police get away with everything, including murder. They

fear something similar could happen to them here," stated Burgos. (Philadelphia Daily News, March 20)

The storeowners' allegations could implicate at least 17 other officers in addition to Cujdik and three police supervisors. An April 2 editorial in the Philadelphia Inquirer described these bodega [neighborhood store] burglaries as a "cancer" undermining the integrity of the police department, yet actions by higher-ups threaten to spread the disease. Jeffrey Cujdik has been put on desk duty, but his cohorts remain on active duty and have been reassigned to other units. "Reshuffling the deck" is how Deputy Police Commissioner William Blackburn described these moves.

The Fraternal Order of Police, which represents the accused officers, claims that the storeowners are lying to take advantage of the other allegations against Cujdik. John J. McNesby, president of Lodge 5 of the FOP, claimed that the narcotics squads were "permitted to disable cameras to protect their own security." McNesby said the FOP would defend Cujdik "to the wall."

There is little independent oversight of Philadelphia police. The civilian-based Police Advisory Commission can review cases, but has little authority to take action and seven board positions have remained unfilled for years. Internal police investigations of separate incidents don't address the larger problem of systemic police abuse.

Dropping charges against victims of police abuse or releasing them from prison after they have served unwarranted sentences is no justice. Real independent oversight of police misconduct will only come when there is community control over the police that gives neighborhoods hiring and firing power over the officers who are assigned to "protect and serve" them. □

# Defending the rights of the nationally oppressed

By **Larry Hales**

***"Is it wrong for me to love my own? Is it wicked for me because my skin is red? Because I am Sioux? Because I was born where my father lived? Because I would die for my people and my country?"***

**—Sitting Bull**

*a chief of the Lakota Sioux*

The period of the 1950s to the late 1960s saw the rise of many organizations of the nationally oppressed that used violence as a means of self-defense.

Not only did these organizations protect their people from racist violence, including police brutality, but they also defended the culture of the oppressed group.

The American Indian Movement is an organization that for over 40 years has fought for the rights of Indigenous people. AIM, which participated in the takeover of Alcatraz Island and supported Lakota elders in dealing with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and corrupt tribal elders at Wounded Knee in 1973—leading to a battle with U.S. troops—says on its Web site regarding its founding:

"Indian people were never intended to survive the settlement of Europeans in the Western Hemisphere, our Turtle Island. With the strength of a spiritual base, AIM has been able to clearly articulate the claims of Native Nations and has had the will and intellect to put forth those claims.

"The movement was founded to turn the attention of Indian people toward a renewal of spirituality which would impart the strength of resolve needed to reverse the ruinous policies of the United States, Canada and other colonialist governments of Central and South America. At the heart of AIM is deep spirituality and a belief in the connectedness of all Indian people."

Culture is not a static thing, but arises from real material life. The culture of the oppressed is infused with their resistance.

The period of the 1960s from whence AIM arose was a turbulent one, one where the oppressed around the world were waging struggles for national liberation.

Inside the U.S., the internally oppressed were no different. While there was a non-violent Civil Rights movement, organizations such as AIM, the Black Panther Party for Self Defense, the Crusade for Justice and other organizations of the oppressed, along with white allies, openly advocated the use of violence.

This period also saw many rebellions in the inner cities, from Watts in California to Detroit and Newark, N.J., and other cities across the country. Black people in particular fought back against oppressive and repressive conditions imposed upon them.

In response to the rebellious mood of the oppressed and of many whites in opposition to the Vietnam War and white

racism, the U.S. government responded with greater reaction.

J. Edgar Hoover branded the Black Panther Party, saying the BPP, "without question, represents the greatest threat to internal security." (pbs.org)

The Counter Intelligence Program, or Cointelpro, was the FBI's answer to the weakening of the Smith Act, a statute passed at the beginning of World War II that was used starting in 1949 to bring charges against 140 members of the Communist Party, until in 1957 the Supreme Court reversed its use as unconstitutional.

While Cointelpro cast a wide net, infiltrating and undermining many left organizations, it was most effectively used against organizations of the nationally oppressed.

**The Free Mumia Abu-Jamal Coalition NYC and Millions 4 Mumia present:**

## 'In Prison My Whole Life'

a new British documentary about the world renowned journalist, who wrongfully sits on Pennsylvania's death row, at SCI Greene. This film premiered at the Sundance Film Festival last year, as well as appearing on that channel Dec. 8, 2008.

## EMERGENCY STRATEGY SESSION

**Sat., April 11 at 6:00 p.m.**

**SOLIDARITY CENTER**

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Directions: take 1,2,3, F,V,A,C,E to 14th Street or 4,5,6, R, Q and W to Union Square.



Mumia's new book "Jailhouse Lawyers: Prisoners Defending Prisoners vs The USA" will be available.

**PART FOUR**







# Bosses talk recovery, workers lose jobs

*Continued from page 1*

means to workers. Bosses want higher profits to roll in, while workers want their jobs back, their homes back and their futures back. That is why the big business media can talk about signs of recovery while unemployment is growing.

### True unemployment is 19.8 percent

In fact, real unemployment is completely underplayed in the big business media in order to hide the extent of the crisis among the workers. According to the headlines, unemployment has risen to an official 8.5 percent. Much less publicity is given to the number 15.6 percent—the other official number—which includes discouraged workers and those forced to work part time although they need a full-time job.

Taking these percentages, the unemployed and underemployed amount to 24 million, not 13.2 million. But even this figure is a gross underestimation of the true unemployment crisis.

A release by Martin Weiss, a financial consultant, reveals that the figures for “discouraged workers” are a complete underestimate. (moneyandmarkets.com, April 6) Weiss quotes a finding by John Williams of ShadowStats.com: “During the Clinton administration, ‘discouraged workers’—those who had given up looking for a job because there were no jobs to be had—were redefined so as to be counted only if they had been ‘discouraged’ for less than a year. This ... defined away the bulk of the discouraged workers.”

In short, a worker who has been discouraged for more than a year disappears from the unemployment statistics altogether. Based on this fact, Williams estimates that actual unemployment is 19.8 percent, or close to 30 million.

The prospect for a capitalist recovery any time soon is highly unlikely, given that

manufacturing is plunging downward, not just in the U.S. but worldwide. Even optimistic bourgeois experts expect economic decline and an increase in the number of unemployed by at least half a million a month for the foreseeable future. In fact, there is no economist who can point to a path out of the present crisis.

At best, the hope is that the massive injection of government funds into the banks, plus another stimulus package over and above the \$787 billion package already enacted, will be able to slow down the crisis and stabilize the system within the next two years.

But an important point for the working class, the oppressed, and all progressive and revolutionary forces to hold on to is the fact that even a mild, artificially forced capitalist recovery based on government spending would still leave the workers in crisis.

### ‘Mother of all jobless recoveries’

The working class is trapped in a capitalist system that is in a permanent crisis. For example, a Wall Street Journal article on March 28 talked about tentative signs that the bottom had been reached in the recession. The article discussed various statements by bankers and indicators from government statistics that could mark a turn toward “positive growth”—meaning a capitalist business upturn with rising profits. It went on to say:

“But a turn toward positive growth is not the same as a recovery, particularly with the current 8.1 percent unemployment rate at a quarter-century high and marching higher by the month. Nariman Behravesh, chief economist at HIS Global Insight ... says unemployment could hit 10.5 percent by late next year, even if the economy is growing at a 3 percent rate by that point.

“What comes next, I’m afraid, will be

the mother of all jobless recoveries,’ said Bernard Baumohl, chief global economist at the Economic Outlook Group in Princeton, N.J. ‘While we may emerge from recession from a statistical standpoint later this year, most Americans will be hard pressed to tell the difference between a recession and recovery the next 12 months.’”

Of course, capitalist experts cannot predict, and have never been able to predict with any degree of certainty, the way their economy will perform over the long run. Marxists, knowing the contradictions of capitalism, knowing that consumption cannot keep up with production for profit under capitalism, understand that overproduction and crisis is inevitable. This is the type of crisis that is ravaging workers all over the world on the largest scale since the Great Depression. So all talk of a recovery is highly premature.

For example, in the U.S. today the crucial automobile industry, which is central to the economy, can sell at a profit only half the number of cars it was built to produce. No sales mean no profits. No profits mean shut down production. That means layoffs, destruction of factories, more poverty, less sales and the crisis deepens.

The same is true of the housing industry. Millions of houses cannot be sold for a profit even as tent cities of the homeless are multiplying around the country. The housing industry, like the auto industry, ripples out into all areas of the economy. The foreclosure crisis, in which millions are losing their homes, means not only a rise in homelessness but a rise in unemployment among all the workers affected by the collapse in housing construction.

Because capitalism has created a widespread, interconnected process of producing everything, a truly global network of production, every layoff in a central industry brings layoffs throughout the global network that those industries depend on. Thus U.S. and world unemployment are both rising. The World Bank estimates that up to 50 million workers could lose their jobs this year.

### Workers can only recover by fighting back

None of this is a recipe for capitalist recovery—quite the opposite. The working class cannot wait for the automatic processes of capitalism to revive, save the situation, and wipe out unemployment, poverty and hunger.

Right now workers in Enfield, Britain, and Belfast, Ireland, have occupied Visteon auto parts plants to demand severance pay and other rights. This follows a similar occupation by the Waterford Crystal workers in Ireland, who themselves were following the example of the Republic Windows and Doors workers who seized their plant in Chicago in December.

The self-action of the working class, organizing from below to resist this vast wave of layoffs, shift cuts, shortening of hours, as well as foreclosures and evictions, is the only way forward.

The battle cry of “A Job Is a Right” must be raised everywhere and the bosses must be stopped.

There must be mass mobilization and coordinated struggle by an alliance between the oppressed and impoverished communities and the workers to stop the bosses from shutting down, from picking up and leaving and destroying lives and communities.

Every penny of the trillions of dollars for the banks should be turned over to relieve the economic suffering of the people by creating real government jobs programs with living wages and benefits—not just crumbs handed down after the capitalists divide up the money from the stimulus package among themselves and take their profits.

This is the only way to push the crisis back where it belongs, onto the backs of the rich profiteers and off the backs of the working class and the oppressed.

They created this crisis. They must pay. Bail out the people, not the banks!

Goldstein is author of “Low-Wage Capitalism.” Information about the book can be found at the Web site [www.low-wagecapitalism.com](http://www.low-wagecapitalism.com). Goldstein’s e-mail address is [fgoldstein@workers.org](mailto:fgoldstein@workers.org).

## Black activists honor Raleigh FIST



For the past 26 years, Black Workers For Justice has held its annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Support for Labor Banquet to help reaffirm the commitment to the ongoing struggle for Black liberation and for full workers’ rights especially in the U.S. South. The banquet program provides political updates on various campaigns along with inspirational cultural songs by BWFJ’s Fruit of Labor Singing Ensemble.

The theme of this year’s April 4 banquet, held in Raleigh, N.C., was “State of Emergency: Jobs for Everyone; Moratorium on Foreclosures; No Evictions; Bail Out the People, Not Banks; End the Occupation of Palestine and End Unjust War in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

Every year, BWFJ presents certain activists with the Self-Determination Award to “recognize and honor people

whose dedication and sacrifice to the struggle for workers rights and to the self-determination of the African-American people has been significant.” Recipients of the 2009 awards included Rev. William Barber from the NAACP; Lewis Cameron, president of International Association of Machinists Local 369 that just settled an eight-month strike against Moncure Plywood and members of Raleigh Fight Imperialism, Stand Together youth group who received a special Self-Determination Youth Award.

Jaribu Hill, an activist, cultural artist and executive director of the Mississippi Workers Center, gave this year’s keynote address. BWFJ members Salia Warren and Saladin Muhammad chaired the program.

—Report and photo by Monica Moorehead

## Activist brunch discusses economic crisis

RALEIGH

Black Workers For Justice holds regular Sunday “activist brunches” for its members and allies in Raleigh, N.C. to discuss broader political developments and issues relevant to local anti-racist and pro-worker campaigns.

On April 5, Fred Goldstein, author of the new book, “Low-Wage Capitalism,” and a leader of Workers World Party, co-led a discussion on the current global economic crisis and the inevitable workers’ fightback against it. Saladin Muhammad, a leader of BWFJ, chaired and also co-led the discussion.

Some of the issues discussed during the three-hour meeting were the role of U.S. capital, the impact of bailouts of the banks and big corporations on the struggle for jobs, housing, education, racism, wars and democratic rights for workers and oppressed people inside the U.S. and



internationally, and key struggles showing the resistance of workers and oppressed people in this period. Examples included the Moncure strike and the Republic Windows and Doors workers’ factory takeover this past December and more.

The well-attended discussion included representatives from BWFJ, Black Workers League, UE Locals 150 and 160, Virginia People’s Assembly, Black Workers Rank and File Network, Raleigh FIST, Bail Out the People Movement and the Environmental Justice Coalition.

—Report and photo by Monica Moorehead



# ‘Bail out the unemployed’ –Angry protests target

Continued from page 1

one off Wall Street itself. As the rain let up, several members of the youth group FIST (Fight Imperialism, Stand Together) began walking down Broadway, determined to march through the financial nerve center. Converging on the youth, police pushed them onto the sidewalk and then arrested four. They were charged with disorderly conduct. One who had been pushed around by the cops was also charged with resisting arrest. He was held in jail for more than nine hours; the others were released after three hours.

Meanwhile, the police ignored the real criminals, who were in the boardrooms and executive offices overlooking the streets.

Bail Out the People organizers anticipate that many of those who marched on April 3, especially the young activists, will be a critical force in organizing unemployed workers on a massive scale in the coming struggle for jobs. The demonstration was a signal of this growing resistance and drew worldwide media attention. Broadcast and print journalists covering the event included China’s Xinhua news agency, Tokyo Broadcasting, CBC, BBC, Al-Jazeera, Reuters, AP and New York television stations. A photo of the march appeared in the New York Daily News.

Speakers repeatedly denounced the \$10 trillion that has been handed over to the banks by the Bush and Obama administrations. New York City Council member Charles Barron said the crooks who received this money “should be looking for bail money to get out of jail.”

While the government has committed this outrageous sum to bailing out the banks and other financial institutions, 4.4 million people have lost their jobs since the economic downturn began in December 2007, more than half of them in the last five months. Millions have lost their homes in foreclosures and evictions.

Just as during the Great Depression of the 1930s, when the homeless set up Hoovervilles, shanty towns named after then-President Herbert Hoover, people have been setting up tent cities from St. Petersburg, Fla., to Fresno, Calif. The Bail Out the People Movement is calling for the kind of jobs program that existed in the 1930s when the Roosevelt government created the Works Project Administration and employed millions of people.

LeiLani Dowell, a member of FIST and a rally co-chair, described how the economic crisis was hurting youth and explained that the hardships they face are inherent to the capitalist system itself.

The other rally co-chairs were Brenda Stokely of the Million Worker March Movement, and Sara Flounders of the International Action Center. Other speakers included Charles Jenkins of Transport Workers Union Local 100; two representatives of the striking Stella D’oro workers; Joe Bullock and Swanzeta Neineni of Baltimore Bail Out the People Movement; Sandra Hines of Michigan’s Moratorium Now! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures & Evictions, Berna Ellorin of BAYAN-USA and Monica Moorehead of Workers World Party.

Following the rally, the Bail Out the People Movement took its message directly to the banks. Marching down Pine Street to AIG, which has received a total of \$170 billion in bailout money, the people chanted “Jobs for all” and “Jail ‘em, don’t bail ‘em.”

Security officers lined up in

front of the AIG building and the nearby Bank of America as those inside peered out the windows. Office workers watched the demonstration from a high, glass-enclosed archway connecting two buildings over Pine Street.

After marching through the narrow streets of the financial district, confronting other financial giants like Citigroup, Fidelity, American Express, the Federal Reserve and the New York Stock Exchange, the protesters proceeded to Water Street, stopped at another AIG building, and then went under the Brooklyn Bridge to Foley Square for a concluding rally. Four large signs, each with a letter spelling “JOBS,” were prominent in the march.

Organized labor came with their union banners. There were contingents from the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, AFSCME Locals 375 and 768, Teamsters Local 808, United Federation of Teachers Locals 2 and 37-901, striking Stella D’oro workers from Bakery and Confectionery Union Local 50 in the Bronx, and New York City Labor Against the War. Others on the march included members of District 1199 New England, Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers/AFSCME, United Autoworkers Local 2334 of Detroit and the Transit Workers Union of New York.

The April 3 march was held on the anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who called for the right to a job or income for all.

The following day, the United for Peace and Justice Coalition held another march on Wall Street, going down Broadway and ending at Battery Park. The Bail Out the People Movement held a brief rally overlooking the New York Stock Exchange and then joined the UFPJ march as it went by. □



April 4, New York



Unless otherwise noted, photos are of April 3, New York.

WW PHOTOS: LEILANI DOWELL, G. DUNKEL, LIZ GREEN, ALAN POLLOCK, RALEIGH FIST

## Seattle focus: WaMu/Chase

Demonstrators marched through downtown Seattle on April 4 with signs saying “Bail out people, not the banks!” The spirited demonstration received much support from passersby. The protest started at WaMu/Chase bank. Speakers pointed out that the bank pillaged the country with subprime loan foreclosures and has now been taken over by JPMorgan Chase. The demonstration also marched on the Federal Reserve Bank and then to Westlake Center for a rally. This groundbreaking march was organized by BAYAN-USA and the International Action Center, which have formed a chapter of the Bail Out the People Movement. It was shown on KING-TV News.

—Jim McMahan





# et Wall St.



April 4 , New York



## Pickers hit Bank of America

*From a Bail Out the People Movement news release.*

At the Bank of America Plaza in Los Angeles spirited demonstrators echoed chants off the towering Bank of America corporate building calling for an end to bank bailouts and foreclosures and evictions. On April 3, a picket line of dozens of protesters rallied around a large tent set up to dramatize the epidemic of “Hoovervilles” or tent cities in California due to the housing and job crisis.

“The government has to do something about all of the people facing foreclosure and forced out into the streets,” said Martha Rojas, a member of the Labor/Community Coalition, which co-sponsored the event.

Rosie Martinez, executive board member of SEIU Local 721, said, “We’re here fighting against foreclosures and for jobs and that’s why we need the Employee Free Choice Act, which helps people get the benefits and protections of a union.”

The Employee Free Choice Act was one of the demands at demonstrations across the country sponsored by the Bail Out the People Movement. In Los Angeles dem-



April 3, Los Angeles

PHOTO: BEV TANG

onstrators promised to be back and hold more protests with creative strategies in getting the message out.

“This crisis is occurring because this system of capitalism is broken and you can’t fix the housing crisis and 11 to 20 percent unemployment in California by handing over \$10 trillion to the banks that exacerbated this crisis. You do, however, make change by handing that money over to working and poor people, who can

make decisions on fiscal spending based on people’s real needs, not profit. We will be bringing back the strategies of activists and communities in the 1930s depression and there will be no business as usual. On to May 1st!” said John Parker from the Bail Out the People Movement.

Other speakers at the rally included Gloria Saucedo, director, Hermandad Mexicana and Teresa Gutierrez of the May 1st Coalition, New York. □



## Youth protest targets banks, legislature

By Ben Carroll and Dante Strobino  
Raleigh, N.C.

Students and youth from campuses and towns all over the region rallied on April 3 in front of the Bank of America and Wachovia financial centers to demand, “Bail out the students, not banks!” Both banks are headquartered in North Carolina and are the recipients of billions of dollars of federal bailout money and the two biggest holders of student loan debt.

The marchers moved from the banks to the state Legislature to demand a real jobs program that can provide work for young people, no education cuts, cancel all student debt and no tuition hikes. Marchers also demanded that if any cuts are made, that they be made in the salaries and bonuses of state administrators, University of North Carolina (UNC) system chancellors and bank CEO’s.

In February, North Carolina’s official unemployment soared to 10.7 percent, the highest unemployment ever recorded in the state since World War II. This is the fourth highest in the nation, well above the official national February unemployment rate of 8.1 percent. The official number of unemployed workers in North Carolina actively seeking work is more than 491,000, more than double from a year ago.

Total unemployment, including people who have stopped looking and people stuck in part-time jobs is closer to 20-25 percent.



April 3, Raleigh

Angaza Mayo-Laughinghouse, of Black Workers for Justice Youth and a student at UNC-Greensboro, speaks in downtown Raleigh, N.C.

Gov. Bev Perdue has proposed cutting the state appropriation to the UNC system this year by 6.5 percent, or \$192 million. This would eliminate 1,600 jobs and eliminate hundreds of courses for students in the 16-campus system. At North Carolina State University (NCSU), there are plans to lay off as many as 170 workers and cut 3,000 places for students.

“Last week, 31 North Carolina State employees were told they no longer have jobs and it’s only the beginning. I find it ironic that Chancellor Oblinger still makes a salary of \$420,000, roughly the equivalent of 20 dorm housekeepers’ jobs,” said Ryan Thomson, a leader of NCSU Students for Social Progress. “Our quality of education is on the decline as

tuition climbs even higher yet again.”

While these banks are getting bailed out, education is becoming less and less affordable and students are falling deeper into debt.

Marchers also saw the connection between the economic crisis and the decisions made by the state to choose between social needs and war funding when they demanded “Fund Human Needs, Not War!” and for the corporations, banks and governments to “Divest From Israel!”

Bail Out the People Movement-North Carolina marchers supported legislation that had just been submitted that same week, calling on state legislators to endorse H.R. 676 for universal health care in the U.S. Congress along with voting for HB

750 and SB 427 for collective bargaining rights in the North Carolina Legislature. This legislation would empower workers to ensure the crisis does not get solved on their backs.

“Students, young people and workers need a fightback movement that struggles for the rights of all people to jobs, education, healthcare and other necessities. Washington and Wall Street created this crisis, but only a fighting people’s movement can bring us out of it,” said Trameka Lancaster, a leader of Black Workers for Justice Youth.

A broad coalition of students from NCSU, UNC-Chapel Hill, UNC-Greensboro, UNC-Charlotte, Hampton University in Virginia, high school students, and young people and workers from across the state had called the action. They launched the Bail Out the People Movement-North Carolina, which includes Black Workers for Justice Youth; Fight Imperialism, Stand Together (FIST); UNC-Chapel Hill Student Action with Workers; NCSU Student Worker Alliance; United Students Against Sweatshops; Students for Social Progress at NCSU; UNC-Chapel Hill Students for a Democratic Society (SDS); Charlotte Action Center for Justice; UNC-Chapel Hill Feminist Students United!; and the Raleigh Anarchist Solidarity Collective. □



# Health care vs. health industry profits

By David Hoskins

An effort to tank any attempts at health care reform under consideration in Congress was recently launched by Richard Scott, the disgraced former CEO of Columbia/HCA. Scott has been making his rounds with lawmakers, and formed a new group to oppose changes in the country's broken health care system. The new group, Conservatives for Patients' Rights (CPR), has hired a public relations firm known for its work with Swift Boat Veterans for Truth in the 2004 elections to help develop its strategy.

CPR has run a series of television ads attacking President Barack Obama's health care plan, even though some of the details of that plan have not been finalized. What CPR and health industry executives are really attacking is the very concept of health care reform. The health industry does not want Congress to have a serious debate about health reform, because they know that the for-profit health insurance industry will be exposed if the issue is debated honestly. CPR is little more than an advocate for the health care industry's reckless pursuit of profits.

Scott is a flawed messenger with a flawed message. As Columbia/HCA's CEO in the 1990s, he built the company into the largest health industry company in the world. Scott was ousted by the company's board of directors in 1997 following allegations that the company had intentionally over-billed state and federal health programs to pad corporate profits. Columbia/HCA pled guilty and paid \$1.7 billion in fines to settle the case.

## Obama's reform plan falls short

President Obama's plan for health care reform falls significantly short of providing universal health care for everyone living in the U.S. Obama's nominee for health secretary, Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, unwittingly revealed volumes about the administration's plans for health reform at her confirmation hearing.

MSNBC reported on April 2 that Sebelius stated during the hearing, "I know the president is totally committed to the proposal that every American should have health insurance." Sebelius' assurance that the administration is focusing on health insurance coverage is very telling.

The hearing focused on the issue of

mandates in its questioning of Sebelius. Some proponents of expanded health insurance advocate an individual mandate that would require workers to purchase a private insurance plan if they are unable to obtain coverage another way. Others have maintained that a mandate financially punishes uninsured workers. Sebelius refused to take a position on mandates.

The focus on mandates evades the larger point: health insurance is not the same as health care. Expanding the pool of the privately insured, with or without mandates, does not guarantee the type of universal health care that workers need.

"Insurance companies can deny people coverage, raise premiums significantly, refuse to cover treatment for certain conditions, and even revoke the coverage of policyholders who have been paying premiums for years," according to a 2008 study by Families USA, a nonprofit advocacy group for health care reform.

Health insurance companies frequently reexamine the medical histories of the insured and dramatically change their policies to eliminate coverage for the exact health services the individual needs,

even though the patient may have paid insurance premiums for years before they required medical services. This abusive practice is known as "post-claims underwriting" and has been the subject of many investigations and court challenges.

Post-claims underwriting and rampant premium increases belie the notion that health insurance is synonymous with access to health care. Even when the insured do get the care they are entitled to receive, high co-payments can make the cost of care prohibitive and drive families into bankruptcy during times of catastrophic illness.

Health Affairs journal found in 2005 that "even universal coverage could leave many Americans vulnerable to bankruptcy." The same article found that medical bills contribute to half of all personal bankruptcies, and three-fourths of those bankrupted had health insurance at the time they got sick or injured.

The administration's plan to sell workers more health insurance, especially during the worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression, does not come close to providing the type of health care system that workers need and deserve. □

# The Fort Dix 5 convictions: provocation and frameup?

By Joe Piette

Mohamed Shnewer is one of the Fort Dix 5, accused and convicted along with Serdar Tatar and Dritan, Eljivir and Shain Duka of conspiring to kill soldiers at Fort Dix, N.J. Shnewer's sentencing hearing is scheduled before a federal judge at the end of April. His family contacted Workers World to get out the truth about his case.

At Shnewer's home in Cherry Hill, N.J., this close-knit family, including his sisters Inas Shnewer and Hnan Duka, his mother Faten Shnewer and his father, Ibrahim Shnewer, all expressed their love and concern for him in numerous ways. But how did the Shnewers' 23-year-old son, who had quit Camden County Community College to help his parents pay their mortgage, end up facing a possible life sentence without parole.

Tatar, an immigrant from Turkey, worked at a 7-Eleven store. The three Duka brothers, ethnic Albanian immigrants, worked long hours in their family's roofing business. Shnewer, of Palestinian heritage from Jordan, was in his cab waiting for a fare at the Philadelphia International Airport when armed FBI agents arrested him on May 7, 2007.

Ibrahim Shnewer explained that he is a cabdriver too and was also at the airport waiting for a fare. When he noticed a commotion, he investigated and saw his son under arrest. Cops told him it was just to question him about a fight. Next day, they found out the real charges.

In the Shnewer family's view, these working-class young adults, all of whom moved to this country as children, were harassed, tricked, manipulated and entrapped by FBI informants, charged with being terrorists, then labeled "Muslim fanatics" and "Jersey jihadists" by the local media.

## Background to the case

All five young men graduated from Cherry Hill High School. None had criminal records. They liked to take vacations as a group in the Pocono Mountains for

skiing, horseback riding, watching movies, shooting weapons at a designated public shooting range, paintball playing and other similar activities.

After one vacation in 2005, they dropped off a video of their trip at Circuit City to get it transferred into a DVD. Those who saw the tape say it shows friends and relatives vacationing in the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania. The people speak mostly in English, but the words "jihad" and "Allahu Akbar" (which means "God is great") are spoken. But many devout and law-abiding Muslims use those words like punctuation marks. (Time Magazine, Dec. 6, 2007)

Brian Morgenstern at Circuit City, while copying the video, noticed at one point bearded men in camouflage shooting guns and shouting in a foreign tongue. He then watched the whole 90 minutes, and the next day called the police. "They arrived within an hour. Two officers watched the video with Morgenstern, and when they heard the word 'jihad' (which can refer to a holy war or a personal struggle of any kind), they said, 'Stop it. That's enough.' With that, the Fort Dix case file was opened. The officers made a copy of the video and left." (Time Magazine)

Ibrahim Shnewer and Faten Shnewer explained that using the words "Allahu Akbar" is common, used on many occasions, "like Americans say Jesus Christ all the time." It does not mean a terrorist plot is happening.

## Role of the informant/provocateur

The star prosecution witness and informant, Mahmoud Omar, is Egyptian-born. He entered the U.S. through Mexico in the 1990s without legal papers. When the FBI hired him in April 2006, he was on probation.

"In 2001, he [Omar] had been charged with opening bank accounts, depositing bogus checks and then trying to draw down the account, according to the indictment. He had pled guilty to three counts of bank fraud and was sentenced to six months in prison and five years' probation

and ordered to pay Patriot Bank \$9,550 in restitution." (Time Magazine)

According to an Oct. 27 Associated Press article, "The defense lawyers also say that Omar sold his Social Security card for \$3,000 while working for the FBI. They told jurors that when the FBI found out about it, agents agreed to look the other way." The Newark Star-Ledger reported on Dec. 22, 2008, that Omar received \$240,000 for working as an FBI informant in this case.

Another informant, Besnik Bakalli, "was wanted for a shooting in Albania and awaiting deportation when agents plucked him from a Pennsylvania jail." It was revealed during the trial that he received \$150,000 pay during the undercover operation. (Star-Ledger, Dec. 22)

Unable to afford attorneys experienced with political trials, all five defendants were given court-appointed lawyers.

## Using bias to convict

The prosecution's terrorism "expert" was Evan Kohlman, "who has no expertise beyond undergraduate qualifications, yet he has testified at numerous terrorism trials." Kohlman made every effort possible through the use of videos and the Internet to link al-Qaeda and Osama Bin Laden to each defendant. "Shnewer's family said Kohlman was especially damaging to their case, comparing the Poconos video to jihad videos, dropping inflammatory words like Osama Bin Laden and al-Qaeda often into his testimony." (Spinwatch, April 29)

As one U.S. defense attorney explained, "If a jury in the U.S. finds any connection between your client and Osama bin Laden, you're going to get convicted." (The Nation, Feb. 4, 2008). Trial Judge Robert Kugler allowed Kohlman to testify, but disallowed a defense expert on the grounds that since he was still in the military, he could not testify against the state.

In 2005, Omar made contact with the five friends, claiming he wanted to convert to Islam to make up for numerous mistakes in his life. Inas Shnewer said Mahmoud Omar instigated the plot to

attack Fort Dix, pushing her brother over and over to download videos of jihadists; pushing him to drive to Fort Dix; pushing him to go to the Poconos for firearms practice. Tired of the harassment, for months Shnewer stopped answering phone calls from Omar "maybe 100 times," Inas said.

In hundreds of hours of recordings, Shnewer mentioned Fort Dix only once, and was the only defendant to say those two words on tape. Even on tape, Omar often castigated Mohamed for inaction: "We've been talking about this matter for three months. Start taking some steps. That's it." (Star-Ledger, Nov. 12, 2008)

Only certain quotes from the tapes were selected during the trial. Hnan, who is married to Eljivir Duka, asked, "Why didn't the jury hear Shain, Eljivir and Dritan say, 'It is forbidden to kill soldiers?'" There was never a meeting in which all five defendants discussed or agreed on the alleged plot.

Finally, when Dritan Duka offhandedly expressed a preference to buy a weapon to use at the Poconos firing range instead of using their rented rifles, it was Omar who pushed this idea. Omar made arrangements with a supposed Baltimore gun dealer (actually an FBI agent) to show up with the weapons for sale. The FBI arrested four of the Fort Dix 5 defendants at that point. "Mohamed was not even there," said Faten Shnewer.

Sensationalist headlines nationwide the next day read, "Islamists charged with plotting Fort Dix attack." (Seattle Times) The trial was held under heavy security, with car lanes closed around the Camden courthouse and as many as 10 deputy U.S. marshals ringing the courtroom, while the jury was sequestered each night. After the eight-week trial all five were convicted of conspiracy last Dec. 23.

"This is not justice," Mohamed's mother told the Star-Ledger. "The only reason they put five kids in jail is because they are Muslim."

For more information, see the defense organization Web site, [www.project-salam.org](http://www.project-salam.org).



# Thousands confront G20 leaders in London

By Kris Hamel

More than 35,000 protesters marched in London on March 28 in advance of the G20 Summit held in that city on April 2. The G20 meeting brought together leaders of the world's largest capitalist countries to discuss the global economic crisis. The "Put People First" march was organized by the Trades Union Council and 120 other groups to demand "jobs, justice and climate."

Thousands of protesters in Berlin and Frankfurt, Germany, took to the streets with a message to the G20 leaders: "We

won't pay for your crisis." (BBC, March 28) Demonstrations also occurred in Vienna, Geneva, Paris, Barcelona and other European cities.

On April 1, dubbed "Financial Fools Day," several demonstrations involving thousands of protesters took place in London. They included the G20 Meltdown in front of the Bank of England; a Climate Camp that occupied the street outside the European Climate Exchange; marches and protests at the ExCel Center, site of the G20 meeting; and a demonstration outside the U.S. embassy organized by the Stop the War Coalition.

Photographs and videos of the demonstrations showed banners and signs with slogans such as "Capitalism isn't working," "Gaza: End the blockade," "Climate Emergency," "Planet before Profit," "Jobs not Bombs," and "We Won't Pay for Their Crisis."

Militant demonstrations outside the Bank of England and the Royal Bank of Scotland were met by hundreds of riot police who unsuccessfully attempted to break up the protests. Bank windows were smashed and a banker effigy was burned. "Built on blood" was written in chalk in front of the Bank of England while pro-

testers spray painted "Class War" and "Thieves" on the building.

Protesters refused to back down as they repeatedly charged at the cops and hurled eggs, paint, fruit and other items at them. Cops arrested 85 protesters and tensions grew as police refused to allow demonstrators to leave the plaza in front of the bank. (Associated Press, April 2)

Many people sustained injuries as cops went wild with their clubs, indiscriminately beating both protesters and passersby. Ian Thomlinson, 47, was violently clubbed on the head by a cop on his way home

*Continued on page 10*

## 30,000 in Strasbourg say 'No to NATO'



Anti-NATO activists oppose all imperialist occupations.

PHOTO: JUNGE WELT

By John Catalinotto

The heads of state and governments celebrating NATO's 60-year role as an international police force of world imperialism needed to impose a virtual state of siege in the region on the French-German border near Strasbourg to keep anti-war protesters away from their summit.

Tens of thousands of French and German cops and a few thousand soldiers were there to stop 30,000 people demonstrating in Strasbourg on April 4 from moving freely. They especially prevented or delayed many of the German demonstrators from crossing the Europe Bridge and joining their comrades in Strasbourg.

The police repression finally led to confrontations. According to reports from the events, when the anarchist section of the anti-war movement challenged the authorities, the cops immediately attacked the main body of demonstrators. They used tear gas, smoke bombs and even rubber bullets.

A broad sector of the traditional anti-war movement and other left forces were able to politically unite around the slogans of "No to NATO" and "Jobs not bombs" and general opposition not only to aggressive NATO expansion but also to the occupations of Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine.

Observers told Workers World that the anti-war sentiment was shared by large sectors of the population on both sides of the border. People in the working-class neighborhoods of Strasbourg had hung anti-war banners in their windows in the days before the NATO meeting.

The political decisions at the NATO

meeting included the continued expansion of NATO eastward. Croatia and Albania, two neocolonies of U.S. and West European imperialism, became full members of NATO. Essentially that means that Croatian and Albanian youth will be asked to serve as cannon fodder anywhere from the Balkans to Afghanistan, not that NATO will consult Croatian and Albanian political leaders.

The main question was Afghanistan. U.S. President Barack Obama presented a continuation of Washington's program for NATO since the end of the Soviet Union: to turn NATO into a worldwide intervention force under the leadership of U.S. imperialism. He appealed for the European NATO countries to send more troops and resources to support the U.S.-led occupation of Afghanistan.

While the French, German and other European powers lauded Obama's plan and welcomed his nonconfrontational style after eight years of George Bush's arrogance, they offered only a few thousand troops and only for noncombat missions in Afghanistan, and with good reason.

More European troops dying in Afghanistan could turn the general anti-war sentiment in Europe into a massive and active anti-war movement. □

## Wage-freeze protest shuts Greece down

By Kathy Durkin

Hundreds of thousands of angry Greek workers shut down government offices, closed the banks and disrupted transportation for 24 hours on April 2.

The nationwide strike, timed to coincide with the G20 economic summit in London, was aimed against government-imposed austerity measures, including a public sector wage freeze. Furious at rising unemployment and growing poverty, workers took direct action and demanded that they not be made to pay for Greece's economic downturn.

They idled the shipping industry as commercial ships countrywide did not leave their ports. Air traffic controllers stopped working, grounding 190 international and domestic flights. Bus drivers turned off the ignitions of their vehicles, while train, ferry and railway workers didn't go to work. Public transportation in Athens was totally disrupted.

Teachers went on strike and state-run schools were closed. Hospital workers stayed out, leaving only emergency staff and minimal medical services in place. Public workers' absences shut down utilities and other government services.

Journalists also joined the strike. News coverage was kept off the air, print and broadcast media were closed down, and publication was stopped for April 3 newspaper editions.

In Athens, more than 15,000 marchers

held banners aloft, to the accompaniment of drums, as they demanded increases in wages and pension protection. Thousands more protesters rallied in the major commercial hub and port city of Thessaloniki, as strikes took hold there and in other major towns and cities.

The 24-hour walkout was called by Greece's largest unions, the General Confederation of Workers and the Civil Servants' Council, which represent one-half of the nation's public and private sector workforce. The Greek Communist Party had a strong presence as well.

In January, Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis' administration enacted a 28-billion-euro (37.6-billion-dollar) bank-support program, which had no provisions to aid workers, who are feeling deeply the effects of the steep economic crisis. Two months later, 4,000 people lost their jobs. Threats of more layoffs loom.

With 20 percent of workers earning less than 5,000 euros (6,712 dollars) annually, higher salaries are needed, not wage freezes or cutbacks.

This is the second nationwide strike to rock Greece since December, when the police shooting of a youth prompted rebellions, which were also spurred on by anger at growing unemployment and poverty.

A popular chant on April 2 which showed the political character of the Greek workers' struggle and surely did not go unnoticed by the G20 was "No compromise! Capitalism must pay for the crisis!" □

### FRANCE

## Workers seize bosses to save jobs



Marseille, France

By G. Dunkel

It is hard—but not impossible—to lay off workers in France because they have legal rights to their jobs. But as the economic crisis tightens its grip on the French economy, more and more French bosses are resorting to layoffs.

Sequestration is the French word for making the bosses bargain when they instead want to lay off workers to make more money. Rather than sitting in to seize the plant, French workers sit around their bosses and insist they bargain. This happened four times in March.

French labor experts say that this tactic appears to be on the rise. What makes the French bourgeoisie tremble is that a majority of the French public support the tactic. (New York Times, April 3)

In the case of Caterpillar's plant near Grenoble, where 733 jobs were on the line, a "sequestration" led the company to back down and French President Nicolas Sarkozy to declare that he would take "steps" to save the factory. The cops have publicly announced that they will not intervene against sequestrations as long

*Continued on page 10*





# Mumia, racism and the court

In one of his weekly radio columns broadcast via telephone from prison, Black revolutionary journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal recently spoke of “The other inauguration celebration.” At the very same time that Barack Obama was sworn in as president of the United States, he explained, guards at Pennsylvania’s Camp Hill prison had launched an attack on Black inmates there, according to an extensive report from FedUp!, the Pittsburgh chapter of the Human Rights Coalition.

Said Mumia, “On the morning of the inauguration, one high-ranking guard reportedly announced over the PA system: ‘He [speaking of Obama] may have won, in my eyes he’s still a n—r.’” That was followed by “a fit of beatings, electric stun gun (and shield) shocking, kicking, punching and other such treatment, accompanied by a rash of racist slurs by white guards against Black prisoners.”

Now Mumia himself is feeling the vengeance of the racist, ruling class establishment that hired these thugs. The U.S. Supreme Court, which can wound and kill with words instead of stun guns, has rejected his appeal for a new trial without even giving any reasons. At a time when the electorate has chosen an African American for president, the court’s action shows shocking contempt for the hopes for unity and overcoming

racism expressed by the majority of voters.

Mumia is known and respected around the world precisely because his case is seen as a monstrous example of racist injustice in the United States. His appeal had invoked the precedent of the *Batson* decision, in which the Supreme Court in 1986 ruled that a prosecutor could not use peremptory challenges to exclude jurors based solely on their race.

At Mumia’s trial, the prosecutor had used 11 of his 15 allotted peremptory challenges to exclude Black jurors. A training video used by the Philadelphia district attorney showed this was a very conscious strategy of the DA’s office. The video was part of the evidence presented to the court in the recent appeal.

In response to the court’s decision, Mumia said, “It shows you that precedent means nothing, that the law is politics by other means.” It must be very hard for a man who has spent most of his adult life on death row to be so profoundly objective about the limitations of the legal system. But Mumia is no pessimist. This former Black Panther is a fighter. His statement means that all who support him must keep up the struggle, because that is the only way to secure justice—not through the courts or the ballot box, but in the streets. □

# Thousands confront G20 leaders in London

*Continued from page 9*

from work and collapsed moments later outside the Bank of England. He died from a possible heart attack suffered minutes after the police attack. The Independent Police Complaints Commission received numerous eyewitness statements attributing Thomlinson’s death to the cops’ actions. A formal inquiry will likely take place. (Guardian, April 5)

Meanwhile, riot police on horseback used batons and dogs to violently break up the encampment at the Climate Camp. They used a tactic called “kettling” to pen in protestors for hours against their will. Many protesters were injured and cops destroyed tents, bicycles and personal items. Climate Camp participant Beth McGrath stated, “Despite our repeated requests to be searched and allowed to leave the space, we were held there for six hours with no access to water, food, toilets or medical care.” (Environment, April 3)

“When [the police] decided they wanted to break up the camp, they did it with a lot of aggression, snatching people who had protested peacefully,” said Climate Camp spokesperson Richard Bernard. “But that’s what we expected because we were not just challenging one element of economic policy but the whole sys-

tem.” Bernard vowed, “This is not the end of it. We’re going to come back in August for Camp in the City Part Two.” (BBC News, April 3)

Other demonstrations against poverty, war and the capitalist system took place on April 2 outside the ExCel Center as well as around the Stock Exchange and the Bank of England. Cops arrested a total of 122 people at the anti-G20 protests. (Reuters, April 2) □

# Workers seize bosses to save jobs

*Continued from page 9*

as there is no violence or property destruction. (bellaciao.org/fr/)

The unions have been quick to point out that 90 percent of France’s bailout money is going to companies, not workers.

Henri Guaino, a special counselor to President Sarkozy, told a conservative French newspaper, “Every politician, every leader must consider this problem ... because everything can break down, the political risk is very high, the risk of violence, of revolt is very big, and the situation can degenerate.” (L’Express April 3) □

# Korean satellite shakes up imperialists

By Deirdre Griswold

On April 5, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea announced it had launched a communications satellite into orbit. It was a remarkable first for this small socialist country in the north of Korea, which has been struggling to develop a modern economy in the face of great hostility from Washington.

U.S. troops have occupied southern Korea ever since the closing days of World War II, when revolutionary forces were liberating the north from Japanese colonial rule. Washington’s occupation and control over the south led to the division of Korea, followed by a bloody war in 1950-53.

The launch of the Kwangmyongsong-2 satellite, announced in advance by the DPRK, provoked consternation among official circles in the U.S. and Japan. Both imperialist countries had sent an armada of warships to the sea east of Korea to monitor the event and menace the DPRK.

Japan had threatened to shoot down the rocket carrying the satellite if any debris from the launch entered Japanese airspace—a threat not taken seriously, since failure could prove an embarrassment and so-called “missile defense” systems are notoriously unreliable.

U.S. President Barack Obama, speaking the same day as the launch to a rally in the Czech Republic, called it “a provocation” and called for strong action against the DPRK in the U.N. Security Council.

It was an ironic locale for Obama’s speech. The Czech regime, which has been trying to

foist a U.S. military base on the people there, had just postponed a vote in parliament on the measure when it became clear that it would not pass. Polls show a large majority of the Czech people are against the base.

The Republican right attacked Obama for not being tougher. Former House speaker Newt Gingrich said he should have ordered “preemptive action” to stop the launch.

For weeks, the U.S. corporate media had been condemning the DPRK for the expected launch, dubbing it “a threat to peace” and “illegal.” Media attention focused not on the communications satellite—there are scores of these now in orbit, most launched by the U.S. and its imperialist allies—but on the rocket used to launch it. The DPRK’s success in fashioning a rocket powerful enough to lift a satellite into orbit was presented as frightening and aggressive.

Completely neglected by the media was the launch, two days earlier at Cape Canaveral, of a satellite “designed to provide high-capacity communications to U.S. military forces.”

“We’re helping to give the most versatile and sophisticated technology to our war fighters,” Brig. Gen. Edward L. Bolton Jr., 45th Space Wing commander, said about the expensive satellite launch by the Air Force. (defencetalk.com)

Washington’s claims that its vast military apparatus—built up at a cost of trillions of dollars—is meant solely to protect peace have lost credibility. World public opinion is opposed to the murderous U.S. wars and occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the continued incursions into Pakistan, the

# Pakistan’s mineworkers face harsh conditions

*Following are excerpts from an analysis by Zia Ur Rehman, currently based in London, that gives insight into the position of the working class in Pakistan, which we publish with permission of the author.*

Eleven mineworkers were killed in a March 7 explosion caused by the accumulation of gas in a coal mine located on the outskirts of Quetta, Pakistan, and run by Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation. All the dead workers were from Shangla, a district adjacent to Swat Valley.

A Shangla resident reported that the mood was sad when the corpses of the 11 mineworkers arrived for burial at the Mian Kilay, a remote village of Shangla. A majority of the village’s inhabitants work in the mining sector in the Balochistan, NWFP and Sindh regions.

Two months ago, an explosion at a coal mine in the Mach area killed eight miners. The rescuers took a month to recover their bodies.

District Shangla along with Kohistan, Dera Bugti, Tharparkar and Jhal Magsi districts have the lowest Human Development Index in Pakistan. Because of immense poverty, unemployment, a lack of income resources, a high rate of population growth and illiteracy, the Shangla people are compelled to work in the mining industry with its dangerous working environment and occupational health hazards to support their families.

The scarcity of development funds allocated to the provincial government and the decreasing number and size of public sector projects contribute to the lack of development of the area.

Mining work is extremely hard physically. Since there is almost no mechanization, all

the mining operations, i.e., coal extraction, loading and transportation, are done manually in most of the mines.

A mineworker, Fazlur Rehman, 24, hailing from Mian Kilay, Shangla, told this writer that the work in the mining industry in the Balochistan is very difficult, as it includes digging, drilling and blasting the coal mines. “It is our ancestral profession and my father was also killed by gas suffocation in a mine 15 years ago. We dig thousands of feet below the ground and make a hollow tunnel in a mountain just to earn the livelihood for our family members, but often the mineworkers die due to gas suffocation or blasts, it is so terrifying,” he added.

In a seminar based on his research entitled, “Bonded labor in mining sector in Pakistan,” Ahmed Saleem, a senior researcher working with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, revealed that the worst form of bonded labor exists in the mining sector throughout the country.

Saleem said most of the miners belong to Shangla, Dir and other regions of Malakand Division. “Private mine owners send a middleman, who uses different tactics to trap people of these regions, especially Shangla. Being a local, whenever he comes to the village, he carries a large amount of money and distributes it to potential workers. Saleem said in case of a disaster, mine owners offer a little compensation. In cases of death, owners are bound to pay much more than that, but mostly such cases go unreported and miners are buried without informing their kin.

Saleem also revealed that many people live below the poverty line and easily get trapped by accepting loans that they can never repay. They end up working in mines.

The prevalence of diseases amongst mine-



Claiming target was arms convoy to Gaza

U.S. planes with Israeli pilots bombed Sudan

By Abayomi Azikiwe  
Editor, Pan-African News Wire

bankrolling of Israel’s aggressions against the Palestinian people and others in the Middle East, and Washington’s pressures to set up U.S. bases and expand NATO into countries once allied with the USSR.

Who can forget the Nuclear Posture Review, presented to Congress by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on Dec. 31, 2001? It specifically listed the DPRK—a small country that has been struggling to defend its sovereignty for more than a century—as a prime target for a nuclear strike by the world’s most destructive military arsenal. The new leaders in Washington have not revoked this bellicose, war-mongering document of the Bush administration.

Thus, it was no surprise when U.S. calls for immediate sanctions against the DPRK over the satellite launch produced no such resolution in the U.N. Security Council. Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said Beijing “is opposed to any act that is likely to stoke tensions.” A Russian foreign ministry spokesperson called on “all sides to refrain from actions that could lead to escalation of tensions on the Korean Peninsula.” (China Daily, April 6)

For now, the U.S. military, through NORAD, is claiming that the DPRK’s launch failed to place the satellite into orbit. But a spokesperson for the Russian foreign ministry, Andrei Nesterenko, confirmed on the day of the launch that the satellite had indeed entered orbit. The DPRK said it was broadcasting revolutionary songs back to earth.

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In the aftermath of the issuance of warrants for the arrest and prosecution of President Omar Hassan al-Bashir of Sudan, the imperialists and their allies are escalating political, diplomatic and military attacks on that African country. Al-Bashir was accused by the International Criminal Court (ICC), based in The Hague, Netherlands, of being responsible for war crimes purportedly committed in security operations carried out against various rebel groups in the western Darfur region.

The recently appointed U.S. special envoy to Sudan, retired Maj. Gen. Scott Gration, visited the country in early April. Although Gration spoke very diplomatically with regard to improving relations between Sudan and the United States, developments over the last several months indicate that the current administration’s policies are still designed to undermine the sovereignty of the Sudanese state.

Reports have recently surfaced that Israeli-commanded, U.S.-made jets and drones bombed at least two convoys in eastern Sudan in January and February, resulting in the deaths of dozens of people from several countries in the Horn of Africa region.

The U.S. was initially suspected of direct involvement in the bombings. However, subsequent statements and news agency articles indicate that the Israeli Defense Forces executed the operations under the guise of intercepting arms shipments from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Hamas in Gaza, where the Palestinian people had been resisting a vicious Israeli attack and invasion.

Both U.S. and Israeli officials have confirmed a bombing attack on a convoy of trucks in Sudan, claiming they were carrying arms for Gaza. On March 31, Anti-War News reported that Israeli officials “today confirmed that dozens of aircraft, fighter-bombers and drones were involved in the January attack against a truck convoy in Sudan, which killed at least 39 people and destroyed dozens of trucks allegedly loaded down with weapons.”

Sudan officials said the attacks took place on Jan. 27 and Feb. 11. The government denied that the convoys were involved in arms smuggling, saying that the vehicles were transporting nationals from other countries in the region.

The charge of arms smuggling is the pretext for an international conference to take place in May in Ottawa, Canada, according to a leading Israeli newspaper, which says that “Britain, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Denmark, the U.S. and Israel will also take part. Immediately after the conference a ‘war game’ is scheduled to take place in Washington, with the participation of security officials and diplomats from the countries involved. The ‘war game’ will practice a scenario of foiling arms smuggling from Iran to the Gaza Strip.” (Haaretz, April 1)

Sudan gains support against ICC warrants

Meanwhile, President Omar Hassan al-Bashir has won the political support of a number of states and regional organizations. Since the ICC warrants were issued, Al-Bashir has traveled both inside the Darfur region as well as outside the

country to Egypt, Libya and Qatar, where the Arab League summit was held. The president has been received warmly and is accepting the support and sympathy of other regional organizations, including the African Union.

Neighboring Egypt, where the regime is wholly dependent on U.S. support, has also been pressured by the imperialists for supposedly not doing its part to stop the transport of weapons from Iran to the Palestinian people in Gaza. President Hosni Mubarak is reported to have warned the Sudanese government to cease arm shipments destined for Gaza.

Since the days of the Bush administration, the U.S. and Israel have been contemplating an aerial bombardment of Iran. Iran has been accused of arming resistance forces in Lebanon and Iraq as well as in occupied Palestine. This latest provocation against Sudan provides the military and political means to implement imperialist aims and objectives in both Africa and the Middle East.

Demand dropping of charges

The ICC has exposed its hypocrisy by indicting the sitting president of an African nation while doing nothing about the tremendous war crimes committed by the U.S. and Britain in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

In Iraq, it has been estimated that more than one million people have died and some four million others have been displaced internally and externally since the beginning of the U.S. occupation in March 2003. Although the administration of President Barack Obama has pledged to draw down its forces in Iraq to 50,000 troops over the next two years, the continued presence of U.S. troops in this Middle East nation still constitutes an occupation. Since the withdrawal of British forces from Basra in March, the U.S. is forced to take even greater responsibility for the war.

At the recent NATO summit in Strasbourg, France, attended by Obama, lip service was paid to the U.S. administration by the European imperialists, who agreed that NATO would send 5,000 more troops to Afghanistan. However, they will not take on a combat role, despite Washington’s insistence. At the same time, Canada and Britain are expressing reluctance about continuing to maintain their troop presence in Afghanistan.

In Afghanistan and Pakistan, more

civilians are being killed in so-called anti-terrorist operations by U.S. forces, which have attacked villages with warplanes, drones and direct combat offensives. The U.S. is also threatening to neutralize or possibly remove the puppet leader of Afghanistan, Mohammad Karzai, by appointing a prime minister to the occupation-supported government. Karzai, who is under enormous pressure from the Afghan people, has had to object to these U.S. plans and declare that his government is not a puppet regime.

Despite these crimes of “preemptive” war, occupation and the wholesale massacre of civilians, the ICC has not seen fit to indict any Western states. Neither the U.S. nor Sudan is a signer of the Rome Treaty that created the ICC. If the U.S. is not subject to its jurisdiction, then why should the government in Sudan submit to its arbitrary actions?

In other parts of Africa, the U.S. backed and paid for the Ethiopian invasion and occupation of Somalia, beginning in December 2006. While Ethiopian forces have withdrawn from Somalia after a two-year occupation, this episode created one of the worst humanitarian crises on the continent, leaving thousands dead and a million displaced.

In addition, the southern African nation of Zimbabwe will continue to be a target of economic sanctions by the U.S. despite the formation of an inclusive government headed by President Robert Mugabe and opposition leader Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai. Because of Mugabe’s program to return white-owned land to the African people, Zimbabwe’s economy has been destroyed by sanctions. The country is now recovering from a cholera outbreak that killed 4,000 people and sickened many others.

A serious double standard operates with respect to countries that attempt to follow a political policy independent of U.S. aims on the African continent. As a result of these contradictions, people in the West concerned about the war crimes of the imperialist states must demand that the ICC charges be dropped against Sudan and its leaders.

At the same time, anti-imperialists should tell the U.S. administration to halt all threats and intimidation tactics against Sudan and any other states or political forces in Africa that seek to exercise their right to self-determination. □

MARXISM, REPARATIONS & the Black Freedom Struggle

An anthology of writings from Workers World newspaper. Edited by Monica Moorehead. Includes:

- Black liberation & the working-class struggle
- The material basis for reparations in the U.S.
- Brief overview of racist oppression & heroic resistance
- What Hurricane Katrina exposed to the world
- Africa: A battleground against colonialism and for sovereignty
- Justice for the Caribbean
- A salute to women revolutionaries
- Why fight-back is inevitable
- Black labor and class solidarity



Protest in Sudan shortly after the bombing of the EL Shifa pharmaceutical plant in 1998. ‘Africa needs reparations, not occupation and sanctions,’ page 102.

workers is also very alarming. A Khyber Medical College’s research report on the mineworkers of District Shangla alone exposed that a majority of the mineworkers were found to be suffering occupational diseases, including pneumoconiosis, asthma, loss of hearing acuity, dermatitis and tuberculosis, all known as mineworkers’ diseases.

Pneumoconiosis is a lung disease resulting from chronic exposure to coal dust, its inhalation and deposition. Major factors responsible for such a devastating condition include poor hygienic conditions, traditional mining practices, no availability of personal protective equipment and odd working hours for coal mine workers.

The resulting figures on occupational accidents in the mining sector in Pakistan are very shocking. According to an estimate, more than 100 people lose their lives annually and a similar number are disabled. Abdul Salam, a workers’ rights campaigner associated with Labor Education Foundation, said that thousands of the mineworkers toil under life-threatening conditions.

Salam added that inhuman child and bonded labor violations take place in the mining sector and many of the mineworkers are registered as daily-wages workers, brought to a coal mine by the contractor. For protection of the rights and lives of mineworkers, Salam emphasized the need to review and implement according to current needs the 1923 Mine Act, which already contains provisions for the exclusion of children under 13 years old, the granting of a weekly holiday and the limitation of weekly hours to 60 above ground and 54 below ground. □



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## XIII Seminario Internacional en el Distrito Federal en México Crisis centrada en EEUU llega a América Latina

Por John Catalinotto  
Distrito Federal en México

La crisis que comenzó con la explosión de la burbuja de bienes y raíces en Estados Unidos no es solo una crisis especulativa y financiera, sino también una profunda crisis capitalista de sobreproducción y además una crisis de militarismo, guerra y medioambiente que involucra el destino de la humanidad.

Aunque no hubo una perspectiva uniforme ni unánime, esta fue la posición dominante presentada a y por l@s 190 activistas polític@s y analistas de 80 partidos provenientes de 40 países, en el XIII Seminario del Partido de los Trabajadores de México (PT), en Ciudad México el 19, 20 y 21 de marzo. Representantes de cinco continentes asistieron, siendo la gran mayoría de América Latina y el Caribe. Un@s 200 miembr@s del PT y otr@s activistas mexican@s también asistieron el evento.

El tema principal del Seminario fue la crisis mundial capitalista y su impacto en los países, trabajadores/as y campesin@s en la “periferia” del sistema mundial imperialista. El enfoque de esta discusión fue América Latina, donde el movimiento en contra de la penetración “neoliberal” imperialista ha revitalizado el debate mundial sobre un futuro socialista. L@s participantes reflejaron las diferencias y debates que se ven entre las tendencias políticas latinoamericanas.

El PT es el sexto partido electoral más grande del Parlamento mexicano y ha apoyado a Andrés Manuel López Obrador para la presidencia. Bajo el liderazgo del Senador Alberto Anaya, el PT ha sido el anfitrión del Seminario por los últimos 13 años. Asistieron tanto representantes de partidos que se encuentran en el poder como Cuba, Vietnam, China y Corea del

Norte, como representantes de partidos electos al gobierno y partidos y personas que están en oposiciones electorales y revolucionarias alrededor del mundo.

Desde el comienzo de la década de los años 90, gobiernos de izquierda y centro-izquierda han reemplazado a regímenes derechistas y militares que estaban respaldados por los Estados Unidos en gran parte de América Latina. Como dijo el analista comunista cubano, Roberto Regalado señaló en su presentación, este cambio no se debe completamente a acciones democráticas masivas ni tampoco a cambios en la política estadounidense después del fin de la Guerra Fría, sino que es resultado de ambas.

El Seminario celebró el último de éstos acontecimientos, aplaudiendo a dos mujeres del liderazgo del FMLN de El Salvador quienes se sentaron a la cabeza durante casi todo el proceso. El FMLN, que lideró la lucha armada revolucionaria en la década de los años 80, recientemente venció al partido derechista en las elecciones presidenciales.

### Crisis de la civilización capitalista

El Seminario reflejó la composición real de América Latina. Hubo representación de la mayoría de las tendencias políticas de la región. Much@s participaban en los gobiernos de izquierda y de centro-izquierda, otr@s eran crític@s y proponían un camino más revolucionario.

Tod@s en el Seminario hablaron fuertemente en contra del imperialismo de los EEUU. La mayoría también habló en contra de la penetración capitalista europea, pero con menos ira. Había un odio casi universal en contra del régimen de Álvaro Uribe en Colombia e igualmente contra el gobierno actual de Felipe Calderón en México. Había sin embargo, diferencias

entre los distintos grupos sobre las relaciones en sus países con las clases dominantes locales y evaluaciones diferentes de los gobiernos de la izquierda y centro-izquierda que gobiernan en la mayoría de los países latinoamericanos.

En su discurso inaugural, el economista y analista político argentino Jorge Beinstein describió “la debilidad del dólar” y “la supremacía imperial” de los EEUU, diciendo que “Lo que se está hundiendo ahora no es la nave principal de la flota (si así fuera numerosas embarcaciones podrían salvarse), sólo hay una nave y es su sector decisivo el que está haciendo agua”. Para Beinstein esto conduce a “una crisis de civilización” sin recuperación capitalista normal visible en el horizonte.

Algun@s de l@s orador@s advirtieron que los partidos de izquierda no deben quedarse atrapados en la posición de manejar la crisis capitalista, es decir, presidir sobre el incremento del desempleo, los recortes en beneficios sociales y una economía en colapso hasta que sean remplazados por un gobierno derechista. Algun@s agregaron que aunque la economía capitalista no tenga una recuperación normal, el capitalismo va a quedar predominante a menos que algún partido, clase social o movimiento lo elimine y lo reemplace con el socialismo.

El analista político dominicano Narciso Isa Conde enfatizó que los nuevos gobiernos de la izquierda y del la centro-izquierda tienen “Una franja (con) vocación revolucionaria, otra reformista y otra sencillamente administra con nuevo estilo,”. Añadió sobre la crisis que “de no producirse cambios estructurales a favor de la autodeterminación y del tránsito hacia una sociedad nacional y continental alternativa al capitalismo, habrá de azotar en mayor grado nuestras sociedades, agravando el

sufrimiento de los/as más débiles.

### Solidaridad en la lucha

Junto al análisis de esta cuestión principal, hubo también discusiones sobre las formas alternativas de integración latinoamericana, migración, los problemas especiales de las mujeres, la juventud, y los pueblos indígenas, y estudios de casos particulares. Berta Joubert-Ceci del Centro de Acción Internacional basado en los EEUU, presentó un reporte sobre la lucha de inmigrantes en los EEUU y la manifestación del 1ro de mayo planeada allá.

Durante las casi 30 horas de discusión hubo declaraciones o manifestaciones de solidaridad, por ejemplo para los Cinco Presos Políticos Cubanos en los EEUU, para el representante del movimiento haitiano, y para los embajadores de Vietnam, la República Popular Democrática de Corea, China, Libia e Irán. La activista libanesa Leila Ghanem, representando a las luchas de los pueblos del Medio Oriente en contra del imperialismo israelí-estadounidense, reportó sobre el reciente Foro de Beirut.

Entre los actuales líderes políticos reconocidos que se dirigieron al Seminario estuvieron López Obrador de México y Ollanta Humala del Perú, ambos derrotados por muy poco en las elecciones presidenciales del 2006, dos ministros del gobierno progresista del Ecuador. La Senadora Piedad Córdoba de Colombia, oponente del régimen pro imperialista de Uribe se dirigió al Seminario por teléfono.

*Catalinotto representó al Partido Mundo Obrero/Workers World en el Seminario y dio una charla sobre “La crisis mundial del capitalismo y la posibilidad de una lucha de l@s trabajadores/as en los EEUU.”*

## Conferencia sobre el racismo

# Una respuesta al boicot estadounidense

### Carta y Petición

*EL siguiente es un extracto de una carta y petición iniciadas por Nord Sud XXI (nordsud21.ch) y el Centro de Acción Internacional para demandar que la administración de Obama participe plenamente en la Conferencia de la ONU de Revisión de la Conferencia Contra el Racismo de Durban, que tendrá lugar en Ginebra, Suiza del 20 al 24 de abril, y para que el Comité de Preparación tome todos los pasos necesarios para la participación plena de organizaciones gubernamentales y no gubernamentales (ONGs) en esta conferencia. Decenas de miles de personas ya han respondido a esta petición. Ver <http://www.iacenter.org/racism/durbanreviewpetition>.*

La Conferencia del 2001 de la ONU sobre el Racismo que tuvo lugar hace ocho años en Durban, Sudáfrica, tuvo un gran

apoyo por parte de los pueblos del mundo — tanto a través de sus gobiernos como a través de miles de delegad@s que representaban cientos de organizaciones no gubernamentales y órganos de la sociedad civil.

A mediados de esta reunión histórica los Estados Unidos e Israel se salieron porque el segundo fue criticado por sus prácticas de apartheid contra el pueblo palestino. La administración de Bush también se opuso a una acción concreta para rectificar la historia de cientos de años de esclavitud y racismo. ¿Cómo podemos solucionar estas cuestiones sin un diálogo participativo?

Al preparar la Conferencia de abril contra el Racismo, la mayoría de los países de América Latina, Asia y África han mostrado una voluntad extraordinaria de participar con principios de compromiso abierto y diálogo con los Estados Unidos. El rechazo de esta oferta al rehusar ir a la mesa será visto como un ataque arrogante sobre

los procesos diplomáticos y fomentará el que la comunidad internacional condene a la administración estadounidense como una que obstaculiza la lucha contra el racismo.

Yo exhorto a la administración de Obama a que participe en esta reunión internacional sin amenazas o precondiciones y con un espíritu de respeto mutuo para todas naciones, especialmente aquellas cuyos pueblos han sufrido tan terriblemente por el racismo.

Me horroriza que Estados Unidos también haya apoyado la marginalización de las organizaciones no gubernamentales (ONGs) en la Conferencia de Revisión de Durban, tratando de asegurarse de que no puedan participar y que su libertad de expresión sea estrictamente limitada, al no apoyar el foro de las ONG.

La participación de las ONGs, a menudo a través de los Foros de las ONGs, ha sido una parte indispensable de cada conferencia importante de la ONU sobre

los derechos humanos. Es por eso necesario que el Comité de Preparación y el Alto Comisionado para los Derechos Humanos hagan todo el esfuerzo posible para proveer los recursos y la logística necesaria para una fuerte movilización pública para la Conferencia de la ONU de Revisión de Durban.

Yo exhorto al Comité de Preparación a que tome pasos inmediatos para llevar a cabo su responsabilidad de facilitar la participación de las ONGs, especialmente la participación de las ONGs de países en camino de desarrollo y que han sufrido más del racismo y de otras formas de discriminación.

Lista parcial de firmantes:

Ramsey Clark, ganador del Premio de la ONU de Derechos Humanos 2008

Curtis Doebbler, Nord-Sud XXI

Federación General de Mujeres Iraquíes

Centro de Acción Internacional